

Testimony of

David Yolen

Ridgefield Educator

Before the

Appropriations Committee

Re:

**SB 107: AN ACT CONCERNING THE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM HEALTH INSURANCE
SUBSIDY.**

March 18, 2022

Good morning, Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Miner, Representative France, and members of the Appropriations Committee.

I testify today in support of SB 107 and the increase in the health insurance subsidy for retired teachers; however, I urge you to amend the proposal to increase the subsidy amount for all retired educators.

The retired teachers' health insurance subsidy has not seen an increase since its 1996 even though insurance prices have continued to go up exponentially. As such, I encourage you to amend this proposal to double the current subsidy from \$110 to \$220 per person month for retired teachers and their spouses under age 65 to purchase insurance coverage from their former school districts and to \$440 per month for retired teachers age 65 and over who do not qualify for Medicare.

When I started teaching 29 years ago, I saw that the state of CT was helping retired teachers with the cost of health care. I naturally assumed that this subsidy would increase over time so that when I retired, it would have kept pace with inflation. As I approach retirement, I realize that this is not the case. This lack of maintenance on health care for retired teachers has created an undue hardship on me and my colleagues who have been teaching for the past 25 years. I ask that you raise the subsidy to assist our community, a community that has given so much to the public.

Thank you for addressing this critical issue impacting our retired educators.